

## Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND:DP:LW  
APPROVED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND  
PA/PRS - MR. CARTER  
H - MR. FLATEN  
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW  
NEA/IAI - MR. KORN  
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER  
NEA/EGY - MR. MARTHINSEN  
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

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O 010008Z AUG 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY MANAMA  
AMEMBASSY RABAT  
AMEMBASSY SANA  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI  
AMEMBASSY TUNIS  
USMISSION SINAI  
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN  
USMISSION GENEVA  
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
USMISSION USNATO  
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AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS  
USINT BAGHDAD  
AMEMBASSY DOHA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
SECDEF WASHDC 0000

JCS WASHDC 0000  
CIA WASHDC 0000  
NSC WASHDC 0000  
USICA WASHDC  
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS POUCH

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD; TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - JULY 31, 1978

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE  
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR JULY 31. FYI  
ONLY, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER.

MR. CARTER: (STATEMENT) WE ARE VERY DISAPPOINTED THAT  
PRESIDENT SADAT HAS ANNOUNCED THAT EGYPT WILL NOT PARTICI-  
PATE IN ANOTHER ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL UNDER  
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PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. THIS NOTWITHSTANDING, SECRETARY  
VANCE WILL BE GOING TO THE MIDDLE EAST AS SCHEDULED TO  
MEET WITH PRIME MINISTER BEGIN AND PRESIDENT SADAT. (END  
STATEMENT).

Q. WHEN WILL HE BE GOING?

A. I WOULD SAY FOR GENERAL GUIDANCE IT WOULD BE LATE ON  
THE NIGHT OF THE 4TH OR EARLY ON THE MORNING OF THE 5TH.  
AND BY THAT I REALLY MEAN MIDNIGHT.

Q. WHAT IS THE POINT OF HIS GOING IF PRESIDENT SADAT HAS  
ALREADY SAID THAT UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES HE WON'T?

A. THIS ANNOUNCEMENT CLEARLY RAISES A NEW SET OF CIRCUM-  
STANCES WHICH WE BELIEVE DO REQUIRE CLOSE CONSULTATION.

Q. IS THE UNITED STATES PREPARED TO PUT FORWARD ITS OWN  
IDEAS OR A PROPOSAL?

A. LET ME SAY THAT THE SPECULATION ON THAT AND A NUMBER  
OF OTHER POSSIBILITIES IS REALLY PREMATURE FOR ME. WE  
ARE IN A SITUATION OF LESS THAN 24 HOURS ON THIS. I JUST  
HAVE TO APPEAL TO YOUR COMMON SENSE THAT I'M NOT IN ANY  
POSITION AT THIS POINT TO GIVE YOU A LOT MORE.

Q. PREVIOUS TO TODAY, THERE WAS AN ASSUMPTION BY THE SECRETARY THAT THERE WOULD BE A NEW FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING DURING THIS TRIP. IS THAT NOW RULED OUT?

A. THAT'S ONE OF THE THINGS THAT I REALLY AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO SPECULATE ON, SIMPLY BECAUSE IT IS STILL SO EARLY AFTER PRESIDENT SADAT'S SPEECH WHICH I HAVE JUST REFERRED TO. BUT WHAT IS ON IS A VISIT BY SECRETARY VANCE TO JERUSALEM AND CAIRO.

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Q. WHAT WAS YOUR ANSWER WHEN YOU WERE ASKED: "WHAT IS THE POINT OF HIS GOING IN VIEW OF SADAT'S ANNOUNCEMENT?"

A. I SAID THAT THIS OBVIOUSLY INTERJECTS NEW DEVELOPMENTS WHICH WE BELIEVE REQUIRE CLOSE CONSULTATION FOR FULL EXPLORATION OF PRECISELY WHERE WE ARE RIGHT NOW.

Q. LAST WEEK YOU EITHER SAID OR STRONGLY IMPLIED THAT THE SECRETARY WOULD NOT BE GOING OUT TO THE MIDDLE EAST UNLESS HE WERE SURE THAT THERE WOULD BE A FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING SET. NOW WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO CHANGE HIS MIND?

A. YOU HAVE CORRECTLY INTERPRETED THAT I EITHER SAID IT DIRECTLY OR CERTAINLY IMPLIED IT--AND I EXPECT I SAID DIRECTLY WHAT YOU SAID.

I THINK THAT IT IS JUST A DECISION THAT'S BEEN MADE IN VIEW OF EVENTS AS THEY ARE NOW.

Q. BUT HASN'T AMERICA'S ENVOY TO THE MIDDLE EAST--MR. ATHERTON--BEEN MEETING PRECISELY WITH MR. SADAT AND MR. KAMEL FOR THE PAST THREE DAYS. WHAT IS IT THAT THE SECRETARY COULD HOPE TO ACHIEVE OTHER THAN, BY HIS PRESENCE, PRESENTING SOME NEW PROPOSAL.

A. WELL, I WOULD JUST SAY AGAIN AT THIS EARLY STAGE, THAT THERE IS A FEELING THAT HE NEEDS TO MEET DIRECTLY WITH THE LEADERS OF BOTH COUNTRIES.

INSOFAR AS TRYING TO SAY WHAT HE WOULD BE DOING BEYOND THAT, I JUST HAVE TO SAY THAT IT IS TOO EARLY FOR ME TO EVEN SPECULATE ON IT.

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Q. HOW DO YOU INTERPRET PRESIDENT SADAT'S STATEMENT?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANY INTERPRETATION. I'VE STATED OUR DISAPPOINTMENT IN IT. I DON'T HAVE AN INTERPRETATION FOR YOU.

Q. IN VIEW OF YOUR ACKNOWLEDGED REVERSAL OF THE POSITION OF--YOU SAID EARLIER YOU WERE IMPLYING OR SAYING THAT THE SECRETARY WOULD NOT GO UNLESS THERE'S A MEETING. NOW YOU SAY HE'S GOING EVEN WITHOUT KNOWING THERE'S ONE.

WHEN AND WHERE AND HOW DID THIS ARISE? IS THIS A RESULT OF THE MEETING THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAS BEEN HAVING WITH FOREIGN POLICY ADVISERS AND YOU'VE JUST GOTTEN THE WORD DOWN FROM THERE, OR WHEN DID THIS COME ABOUT?

A. THE DECISION OBVIOUSLY HAS BEEN TAKEN VERY RECENTLY IN THE WAKE OF THE SADAT SPEECH AND THE ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF IT. AND AS YOU ALL KNOW, THE SECRETARY IS WITH THE PRESIDENT AT CAMP DAVID NOW.

Q. CAN'T YOU CONFIRM THAT THIS WAS THE DECISION PHONED DOWN FROM CAMP DAVID; IT WAS TAKEN BY CARTER AND VANCE AND THE OTHERS IN THAT MEETING?

A. I CAN CONFIRM THAT THE SECRETARY DID INDEED REACH THIS DECISION AND GIVE IT TO ME FROM CAMP DAVID.

Q. HODDING, DO WE STILL ANTICIPATE THAT THERE WILL STILL BE A FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING. OR WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THE FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING?

A. ON THIS ONE I'M JUST SAYING WHAT IS BOTH OBVIOUS AND COMMONSENSICAL. WE HAVE NO ANTICIPATION ON THIS. WE REALLY DON'T.

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Q. I THINK I KNOW THE ANSWER TO THIS, PUTTING IT TOGETHER; BUT AS THE SECRETARY OF STATE LEFT THE LEEDS CASTLE CONFERENCE, HE WAS UNDER APPARENTLY A FIRM BELIEF THAT BOTH PARTIES WERE GOING TO ATTEND A FOREIGN MINISTERS CONFERENCE

IN THE NEAR FUTURE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. IS THAT CORRECT?

A. THAT IS CORRECT.

Q. SO THEN WHATEVER HAS HAPPENED ON THE EGYPTIAN SIDE SINCE THEN NOW APPARENTLY DID NOT TAKE PLACE, FOR INSTANCE, DURING THE SADAT-WEIZMAN MEETING IN SALZBURG.

A. LET ME JUST SAY SOMETHING ON BACKGROUND.

(BEGIN BACKGROUND: THE STATEMENT THAT THE SECRETARY GAVE THERE AT LEEDS WAS THE STATEMENT THAT WAS SEEN BY BOTH FOREIGN MINISTERS BEFORE HE GAVE IT.

Q. BUT ON THAT SAME QUESTION HAD THE SECRETARY BEEN TOLD EVEN BEFORE THE LEEDS MEETING THAT THE EGYPTIAN SIDE WAS WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN A FOLLOW-UP FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING?

A. I'M NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO PUT A TIME FRAME ON WHY AND WHEN HIS EXPECTATION AROSE. I JUST AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO DO THAT.

BUT YOU ALL KNOW EXACTLY WHAT HE SAID. HE SAID, "YES, I EXPECT" AND HE ALSO SAID, "I ANTICIPATE THAT THERE WILL BE ONE" WHEN HE CAME OUT OF LEEDS. BUT I CAN'T GO ANY FURTHER THAN THAT. (END BACKGROUND).

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Q. CAN YOU BE A LITTLE MORE PRECISE ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF THE SECRETARY'S TRIP AS NOW DEFINED. PREVIOUSLY IT WAS TO SET UP A FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING WHOSE EXISTENCE IN PRINCIPLE HAD BEEN THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN AGREED.

NOW WE HAVE A SITUATION WHERE THE EGYPTIANS ARE DEMANDING AN ENHANCED U.S. ROLE, AND PRESUMABLY THIS GOVERNMENT MUST DECIDE WHETHER THE AMERICAN ROLE IN THIS SITUATION HAS TO BE REDEFINED OR NOT.

ARE THE CONSULTATIONS THAT THE SECRETARY WILL BE CARRYING OUT IN THE MIDDLE EAST GOING TO BE AIMED TOWARD A DECISION ONE WAY OR THE OTHER ABOUT THE FUTURE AMERICAN ROLE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS?

; I AM LITERALLY IN NO POSITION TO AMPLIFY THE STATEMENT I HAVE MADE. I DO NOT HAVE THE INFORMATION EITHER PRIVATELY OR PUBLICLY TO OFFER ON THAT, AND I CAN'T EVEN SPECULATE ON IT.

Q. PRINCE FAHD OF SAUDI ARABIA IS CURRENTLY IN CAIRO. AS FAR AS YOU KNOW, IS HE TRYING TO PERSUADE PRESIDENT SADAT TO ATTEND THE FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING OR NOT TO ATTEND ONE, OR DOES HE AT ALL TALK TO HIM ABOUT THIS?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO OFFER ON CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THOSE TWO NATIONS' REPRESENTATIVES. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING AT ALL TO OFFER ON THAT.

Q. DON'T YOU EXPECT THE SAUDIS TO HELP YOU IN MOVING FORWARD THE PROCESS OF THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE NEGOTIATIONS?

A. YES.

Q. DO YOU THINK THEY ARE DOING IT?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO OFFER ON THAT SET OF MEETINGS.

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I HAVE NOTHING ELSE TO OFFER.

Q. DOES THE SECRETARY STILL INTEND TO STAY FOR A WEEK TO TEN DAYS, OR IS HE JUST GOING TO MAKE A VISIT TO EACH PLACE NOW, AND IS HE PREPARED TO SHUTTLE BETWEEN THESE GUYS NOW THAT THEY ARE NOT GOING TO MEET?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING AT ALL. I CAN'T EVEN SPECULATE ON THAT, NOT BECAUSE I AM UNDER ANY RESTRAINTS, BUT JUST BECAUSE I HAVE NO SPECULATION TO OFFER ON IT. I JUST KNOW THAT HE IS GOING TO BOTH PLACES IN THE ORDER I SUGGESTED.

Q. AND NOT TO SAUDI ARABIA AND NOT TO JORDAN?

A. I KNOW OF NO PLANS FOR OTHER STOPS ON THE TRIP.

LET ME SAY, I AM TELLING YOU PRECISELY WHAT I KNOW RIGHT NOW. AND AS IT CHANGES, IF IT CHANGES, I WILL TRY TO GET MORE PRECISE.

Q. AS OF NOW, HE PLANS TO GO TO JERUSALEM FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS, GO TO CAIRO FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS, AND THEN IT IS UP IN THE AIR.

A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING BEYOND THAT.

Q. STARTING OFF WITH JERUSALEM?

A. STARTING OFF WITH JERUSALEM.

Q. ON AUGUST 5TH, SAME DAY?

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A. JUST TAKE THE TRAVEL TIME, IN THE EVENING OF THE 5TH, WHICH, I ASSUME, IS THE ARRIVAL. THIS IS ALL FOR GUIDANCE PURPOSES. I AM HAPPY TO GIVE IT TO YOU FOR GUIDANCE. AT THIS POINT I WANT TO SAY THERE IS ALWAYS A POSSIBILITY THAT A SLIP IN TIME COULD OCCUR, AND I WOULD NOT BE AT ALL

EMBARRASSED TO COME OUT TOMORROW AND TELL YOU IT IS HAPPENING ON THE 6TH.

Q. YOU SAY YOU CAN'T ANTICIPATE WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN ON THIS. I PRESUME IT IS STILL THE INTENTION OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO HAVE A FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING WHICH WOULD FOLLOW UP THE LEEDS CASTLE TALKS.

A. I CAN'T GO THAT FAR WITH YOU. I LITERALLY THINK AT THIS POINT THE MAJOR THEME OF HIS TRIP OUT THERE IS TO DISCUSS WITH BOTH LEADERSHIPS THE SITUATION WHICH NOW IS IN EFFECT IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND I AM SIMPLY NOT GOING TO SAY THAT HE HOPES THIS OR HE HOPES THAT OR EXPECTS THIS OR EXPECTS THAT, BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE THOSE EXPECTATIONS OR HOPES TO OFFER.

Q. DO YOU ALL KNOW ANYTHING BEYOND WHAT SADAT SAID IN HIS SPEECH ABOUT WHY HE IS SO UPSET, WHY HE REFUSES TO DO THIS? I MEAN, HE IS CLEARLY UPSET.

A. I DON'T THINK THAT I HAVE ANY INTERPRETATION OR ANYTHING THAT I CAN GIVE YOU.

Q. DO YOU ALL KNOW ANY MORE ABOUT WHY HE IS UPSET THAN WHAT HE SAID PUBLICLY, OR ARE THERE ANY OTHER REASONS BEYOND HE IS IRRITATED THAT BEGIN SAYS HE WON'T GIVE SOMETHING FOR NOTHING?

A. I JUST HAVE TO REPEAT THE OBVIOUS. CLEARLY WE HEAR REGULARLY FROM OUR AMBASSADORS AND OUR SPECIAL ENVOYS IN THE AREA. BUT I JUST DON'T HAVE ANYTHING THAT I CAN OFFER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BEYOND WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN IN THE SPEECHES.

Q. IS WHAT HE IS SAYING PUBLICLY REALLY THE REASON HE IS ANGRY?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO COMMENT ON WHAT HIS REASONS ARE, OR WHAT WE THINK THEY ARE.

Q. IS IT CLEAR TO US THAT THE EGYPTIANS WANT THE UNITED STATES NOW TO COME FORTH WITH A PLAN OF ITS OWN? HAVE THEY

MADE THIS EXPLICIT TO US IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO READ BEHIND THE PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF ANY OF THE PARTIES OUT THERE AT THIS POINT. I CAN'T GO INTO WHAT ANY OF THE PARTIES HAVE SAID TO US DIPLOMATICALLY.

Q. WAS THIS CAMP DAVID MEETING CALLED BECAUSE OF WHAT SADAT DID? WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE CAMP DAVID MEETING?

A. NO. I CAN ONLY ASSURE YOU THAT THE MEETING WAS SET BEFORE.

Q. WHEN WAS IT SET UP?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO GO INTO THAT, BUT IT WAS SET ENOUGH AHEAD THAT IT COULD NOT HAVE BEEN IN REACTION TO --.

Q. DID THEY DISCUSS ANYTHING EXCEPT THE MIDDLE EAST TALKS?

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A. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT WHAT WAS SET FORTH WAS A GENERAL DISCUSSION OF A NUMBER OF FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS AND BEYOND THE MIDDLE EAST. BUT WHAT HAS HAPPENED UP THERE FROM LAST NIGHT UNTIL NOW, I DON'T KNOW WHAT IS REALLY BEEN --

Q. THIS MAY BE BELABORING THE OBVIOUS, BUT WHAT IS IT EXACTLY THAT YOUR STATEMENT IS DISAPPOINTED ABOUT?

A. WE ARE DISAPPOINTED OBVIOUSLY THAT PRESIDENT SADAT HAS SAID THAT HE WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN ANOTHER ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. THIS IS WHAT WE ARE DISAPPOINTED ABOUT.

Q. ARE YOU DISAPPOINTED BECAUSE MR. BEGIN IS NOT CHANGING HIS POSITION ON OCCUPIED TERRITORIES?

A. I THINK WE HAVE MADE OUR POSITION PRETTY CLEAR ON THAT, AND I AM NOT GOING TO GO BACK AROUND ON CYCLES OF DISAPPOINTMENT. I HAVE A DISAPPOINTMENT STATEMENT TO MAKE TODAY. I HAVE HAD OTHER THINGS TO SAY IN THE PAST, AND EACH TIME SOMEBODY SAYS, "WELL, AREN'T YOU DISAPPOINTED ABOUT THE OTHER THING", I AM JUST GOING TO HAVE TO GO WITH TODAY'S DISAPPOINTMENT.

Q. ALSO ON THE MIDDLE EAST, DID EITHER THE PRESIDENT OR THE SECRETARY OF STATE SEND A LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER BEGIN ABOUT THE SITUATION IN LEBANON ASKING FOR RESTRAINT ON THE PART OF THE ISRAELIS?

Q. I AM ORDINARILY NOT IN A POSITION TO CONFIRM. LET ME TAKE THE QUESTION AND SEE WHAT I CAN GET.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY STATEMENT ON THE LEBANESE SITUATION?



A. I HAVE A STATEMENT. IF YOU WANT TO ASK ME SOME  
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QUESTIONS, I MAY BE ABLE TO --

LET ME JUST TAKE WHAT I HAVE GOT HERE.

AS YOU KNOW, THE DECISION WAS TAKEN AND THEN CARRIED FORWARD BY THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT TO SEND A 500-MAN UNIT INTO SOUTHERN LEBANON. TO STATE WHAT I THINK IS OBVIOUS TO YOU WHO HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING ADMINISTRATION POLICY ON THIS, WE OBVIOUSLY WELCOME THE DECISION.

AS YOU KNOW, RESOLUTION 425 CALLED FOR RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT, AND WE SEE A DECISION TO PUT TROOPS IN THE SOUTH AS A POSITIVE STEP IN RE-ESTABLISHING LEBANESE GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY.

I WOULD ADD, OF COURSE, PRIOR TO THAT RESOLUTION HAS BEEN UNITED STATES POLICY TO ENCOURAGE SUCH A STEP.

OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THE LEBANESE FORCES WILL TAKE UP POSITIONS IN THE CENTRAL SECTOR OF SOUTHERN LEBANON IN ORDER TO BEGIN THE PROCESS OF BRINGING THAT AREA BACK UNDER LEBANESE GOVERNMENT CONTROL. IT WILL BE WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE UN FORCE WITHIN THE AREA ASSISTING IN MAINTAINING SECURITY THERE.

I WOULD SAY OBVIOUSLY THAT THIS STEP WAS TAKEN IN CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH UNIFIL, WHICH HAS PEACEKEEPING RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AREA.

WE ALSO MAINTAINED A CLOSE DIALOGUE WITH THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT ON THE SITUATIONS. I CAN SAY--TO REPEAT MYSELF BUT IT IS A LEBANESE DECISION.

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ON THE REPORTS OF MILITARY ACTION AS THE TROOPS MOVE FORWARD. WE HAVE SEEN THE REPORTS. OUR LAST INFORMATION IS THAT THE EXCHANGE WHICH TOOK PLACE, WITH WHOM I AM NOT

ABLE AT THIS POINT TO CONFIRM, THAT THE FIRING HAS STOPPED.

WE CONTINUE TO URGE THAT ALL CONCERNED COOPERATE WITH THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT IN SUPPORTING THIS MOVE TO RESTORE THE AUTHORITY OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT IN SOUTHERN LEBANON.

I CAN'T SPECULATE ON THE FUTURE. I WILL JUST HAVE TO KEEP REPEATING THAT THIS IS A MOVE WHICH WE SUPPORT AS BEING IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF LEBANON AND THE AREA IN GENERAL.

Q. YOU EXPRESSED BEFORE THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WITH WHAT SADAT HAS NOW DECIDED.

I'D LIKE TO ADDRESS THIS QUESTION, REALLY, TO THE ATTITUDE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND I ASK IT BECAUSE LAST JANUARY HE REPRESENTED THE UNITED STATES DURING TALKS THAT SADAT BROKE OFF, HE REPRESENTED THE UNITED STATES AT LEEDS AND WAS LEFT WITH THE IMPRESSION BY THE EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER THAT THERE WOULD BE A FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING, AND NOW THE PRESIDENT OF EGYPT GOES THE OTHER WAY, SO THAT TWICE IN SEVEN MONTHS THE SECRETARY IS IN THE MIDDLE OF WHAT PERSONALLY WOULD APPEAR TO BE A SETBACK FOR HIM, IN TERMS OF HIS POSITION AS A MEDIATOR HERE.

DID HE PASS ON TO YOU SOMETHING IN THIS CONNECTION THAT GOES BEYOND THE OFFICIAL DISAPPOINTMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT?

A. NO.

Q. DOES THE UNITED STATES PLAN TO PRESSURE EGYPT NOW TO CHANGE ITS POSITION, AND IF SO, WHAT?

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A. I HAVE NO SPECULATION ABOUT WHAT WE ARE GETTING READY TO DO OR HAVE IN MIND.

Q. I GATHER THE SECRETARY, IN HIS ISSUES AND ANSWERS PROGRAM, REPEATED THAT THE U.S. THOUGHT ISRAEL SHOULD AGREE IN PRINCIPLE TO WITHDRAW ON THE WEST BANK. DOES THE U.S. STILL BELIEVE THAT THE QUESTION OF WHAT TERRITORY SHOULD BE VACATED SHOULD BE LEFT TO NEGOTIATIONS, IN OTHER WORDS, THAT THERE IS ROOM FOR COMPROMISE?

A. WE HAVE EXPRESSED OUR INTERPRETATION OF WHAT WE BELIEVE  
A. WE HAVE EXPRESSED OUR INTERPRETATION OF WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT THE TERRITORIAL QUESTION REPEATEDLY. THERE IS NO CHANGE IN THAT POSITION, BUT WE ALSO SAY THAT THIS IS A MATTER FOR DIRECT NEGOTIATION.

Q. I REALIZE YOU ARE CONSTRAINED AND YOU CAN'T SPECULATE ON IT, BUT MAYBE LET THIS STAND AND IT WOULD BE SOMETHING IN ITSELF. WOULD A FUNCTIONAL EQUIVALENT OF A FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE BE VISITS TO THE UNITED STATES BY MR. BEGIN AND MR. SADAT?

A. LET ME JUST SAY THAT AT LEAST, AS OF MY LAST UNDER-

STANDING, I KNOW OF NO PLANS FOR THAT. I'M NOT RULING IT OUT; I SIMPLY AM NOT AWARE OF ANY SUCH THING. I DON'T KNOW WHAT A FUNCTIONAL EQUIVALENT IS. LET ME JUST SAY THAT WE THINK DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS ARE THE OBJECTIVE IN THE AREA, AND THAT IS A POSITION WE HAVE HELD.

I REALLY WANT TO KEEP REPEATING SOMETHING. IT'S NOT EVEN BEING CUTE OR RESTRAINED ON THIS THING. WE ARE IN A VERY SHORT TIME FRAME AFTER AN ANNOUNCEMENT BY PRESIDENT SADAT. BRILLIANT AS I KNOW YOU THINK WE ARE, IT'S A  
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LITTLE FAST FOR ME TO HAVE ANSWERS TO EVERYTHING, OR FOR THE ADMINISTRATION TO.

Q. WHY, AT THIS TIME, ARE YOU ALL TAKING HIM SERIOUSLY? HE WAS SAYING THIS EXACT SAME THING WHEN WE WERE IN LONDON, OR DURING THE LEEDS CASTLE THING, AND YOU PERSONALLY YELLED AT ME BECAUSE I QUESTIONED WHETHER THE MEETING WAS ACTUALLY GOING TO TAKE PLACE. WHY DO YOU BELIEVE HIM NOW? WHY HAVE YOU SUDDENLY DECIDED THAT HE REALLY MEANS WHAT HE SAYS? WHAT HAS CHANGED?

A. I THINK THAT THE STATEMENT YESTERDAY WAS VERY CLEAR ON THE SUBJECT.

Q. BUT IT WAS CLEAR IN LONDON, TOO.

A. NO, IT WAS NOT CLEAR.

Q. WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? I MEAN, HE SAYS HE WON'T DO IT UNLESS THERE ARE NEW ELEMENTS.

A. LET ME SAY THAT WE CLEARLY BELIEVE THAT HIS MESSAGE IS CLEAR.

Q. ARE YOU SAYING, DIPLOMATICALLY, THAT SADAT OVERRULED KAMEL?

A. NO. NO.

Q. I JUST WANT TO CHECK ONE MORE THING. IN THE SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE AT LEEDS, AS I RECALL, THE THRUST

OF WHAT HE WAS SAYING WAS THAT THE LEEDS MEETING HAD BEEN POSITIVE. I THINK HE SAID THAT THE FACT THEY HAD MET TOGETHER WAS PROGRESS. SADAT SAID YESTERDAY THAT THE OVERALL RESULT OF THE MEETING WAS NEGATIVE. IS THAT A  
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DIFFERENCE OF OPINION?

A. ON ITS FACE, YES.

Q. CAN YOU GIVE US A SHORT EVALUATION OF WHERE YOU THINK  
THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE INITIATIVE NOW STANDS. IS IT  
DOOMED, IS IT TERMINALLY ILL, COMATOSE?

A. ANY ONE OF THOSE PHRASES WOULD DOOM ME, AND I'D HAVE  
ABSOLUTELY NO --  
VANCE

NOTE BY OC/T: POUCHED TO ALGIERS.

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